

T H E O D O R A.
A N
O R A T O R I O.

As it is Perform'd at the
T H E A T R E - R O Y A L in *Covent-Garden.*

Set to Musick by Mr. *H A N D E L.*



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BELIEVE nothing more need be mention'd to account for, or recommend the Choice of the following Subject on this Occasion, than that the great Mr. *Boyle* thought it worthy his Pen: In a Treatise entitled, *The Martyrdom of Theodora and Didymus*, Book II. written by a Person of Honour: and printed in 1687; and since reprinted in his Works. Where, in his Preface, he tells us, that “ Having had occasion to

“ turn over a Martyrology, and some other Books, that related to the Sufferings of the primitive Christians, he chanced to light on those of a Virgin, who, tho' (to his Wonder) she was left unnamed by the other Writers, that mention the Fact, seem'd plainly to be the same, that is by one of them expressly call'd *Theodora*.

“ And that in another Author, he found mention made of a Person about *Dioclesian's* Time, whom he took to be our Martyr, that was intimated to be of high Quality, if not a Princess; which Title, says he, I had without scruple given her: If I had been half as sure that she was a Princess as that she deserv'd to be one.

But the *French* Tragedian, I think, has styled her a Daughter, or Descendant of *Antiochus*, and herein I have follow'd *Him*; but in no other Circumstance or Sentiment whatever; the rest being chiefly taken from Mr. *Boyle's* Plan, as far as the Scantiness of a Performance of this kind would permit.

It seems, this noble Author had divided the Story into two Parts: “ In the first whereof, he gave somewhat at large the Character of these two excellent Persons: He mention'd the Rise and Progress of *Didymus's* Love; the Degeneracy of the then Christians, which provok'd Divine Providence to expose them to a very bloody Persecution; that *Theodora* being involv'd therein was brought before the President of *Antioch*; that she resolutely own'd her Religion before him, and resisted both his Promises, and his Threats; that thereupon the Judge doom'd her to offer Sacrifice to Idols, or to be prostituted in the public *Stews*; that, after an eager Debate in her own Mind, refusing to offer Sacrifice, she was led away to the infamous Place; where being shut up in a Room, she employ'd the little Time given her for further Deliberation, in fervent Prayer to the true God, for a Rescue of her Purity, not her Life; in order whereunto she design'd, and hoped, by Resistance and Contumelies, to provoke her first Assailant to become her Murderer.

These were the Contents of the first Part; which having gone through many Hands, in loose Papers only, some of them happened to be lost, and the Author could not be prevail'd upon to endeavour their Recovery.

“ The Second Part consists of an Account of the last Hours of her Life; and particularly of those Sufferings, that ended in her and *Didymus's* glorious
“ Martyrdom;

“ Martyrdom; and, (happily) so much of this Book, says the Author, was
 “ by little and little retriev’d, that a Pretence was afforded my Friends, to
 “ press me to repair the Breaches, and restore, out of my Memory, or other-
 “ wise, a Piece, which they would needs persuade me, might do some good,
 “ by rendering Virtue amiable, and recommending Piety, to a Sort of Readers,
 “ that are much more affected by shining examples, and patheticall Expres-
 “ sions, than by dry Precepts and grave Discourses.

And I flatter myself there may be Readers to whom the following Lines, (to
 complete in some measure the Story, and point out the Moral of it,) may be
 acceptable, tho’ they would have prov’d tedious, especially at the Conclusion
 of the Performance.

SEPTIMIUS to the Christians.

Ye happy Christians, happy ’midst your Woes,
 Behold a Convert; take me to your Fold;
 Your Enemy no more, if helpless Friend.

As lovely in their Deaths, as in their Lives,
 Fal’n are the matchless Pair: and falling thus,
 They struck Conviction in a thousand Hearts;
 But chiefly *Theodora*, whom no Threats,
 Nor her disfigur’d Lover’s lifeless Limbs,
 Could terrify. — She saw, and with a Smile
 Contemptuous on the Impotence of Rage,
 Bade lead her to the Stake. — Where while she pray’d,
 A sweet Effusion of celestial Joy,
 Flush’d in her Cheeks, and gave her native Charms
 New Lustre, ev’n such Majesty, she seem’d
 Not going to Heav’n, but just come from thence;
 To Lesson with this Truth the Standers-by;
 That, *Whoso hopes to live, must wish to die.*

*Join ye your Songs, ye Saints on Earth,
 With the blest Saints above:
 And hail the Triumphs of their Birth,
 In Glory, Peace, and Love.*

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

VALENS, *President of Antioch.*
 DIDYMUS, *A Roman Officer, converted by, and in Love
 with Theodora.*
 SEPTIMIUS, *a Roman Officer, his Friend.*
 THEODORA, *A Christian of Noble Birth.*
 IRENE, *A Christian.*
 Chorus of Christians.
 Chorus of Heathens.





T H E O D O R A.

A N

O R A T O R I O.

P A R T I. S C E N E I.

R E C I T A T I V E.

V A L E N S.



TIS *Dioclesian's* Natal Day. ----
Proclaim, throughout the Bounds of *Antioch*,
A Feast, and solemn Sacrifice to *Jove*. ----
Who so disdains to join the sacred Rites,
Shall feel our Wrath, in Chastisement, or Death.
And This, *Septimius*, take you in Charge.

A I R.

Go, my faithful Soldier, go.
Let the fragrant Incense rise,
To Jove, great Ruler of the Skies:

C H O R U S.

And draw a Blessing down,
On his Imperial Crown;
Who rules the World below.

B

R E C I-

THEODORA.

RECITATIVE.

Didymus. --- Vouchsafe, dread Sir, a gracious Ear
To my Request. --- Let not your Sentence doom
To Racks and Flames, all, all, whose scrup'lous Minds
Will not permit them, or, to bend the Knee
To Gods they know not, or, in wanton Mood,
To celebrate the Day with *Roman* Rites.

Valens. Art thou a *Roman*, and yet dar'st defend
A Sect, rebellious to the Gods and *Rome*?

Didymus. Many there are in *Antioch*, who disdain
An Idol-Offering, yet are Friends to *Cæsar*.

Valens. It cannot be: They are not *Cæsar's* Friends,
Who own not *Cæsar's* Gods. --- I'll hear no more.

A I R.

Racks, Gibbets, Sword, and Fire,
Shall speak my vengeful Ire,
Against the stubborn Knee:
Nor gushing Tears,
Nor ardent Pray'rs,
Shall shake our firm Decree.

Chorus of Heathens.

For ever thus stand fix'd the Doom
Of Rebels to the Gods and Rome:
While sweeter than the Trumpet's Sound,
Their Groans and Cries are heard around.

S C E N E II.

RECITATIVE.

Didymus. Most cruel Edict! Sure, thy gen'rous Soul,
Septimius, abhors the dreadful Task

Of

Of Persecution. --- Ought we not to leave
The free-born Mind of Man, still ever free?
Since vain is the Attempt, to force Belief
With the severest Instruments of Death.

A I R.

*The raptur'd Soul defies the Sword,
Secure of Virtue's Claim;
And trusting Heav'n's unerring Word,
Enjoys the circling Flame.
No Engines can a Tyrant find
To storm the Truth-supported Mind.*

R E C I T A T I V E.

Septimius. I know thy Virtues, and ask not thy Faith:
Enjoy it as you will, my *Didymus*. ---
Tho' not a Christian, (for I worship still
The Gods my Fathers worship'd) yet, I own,
Something within declares for Acts of Mercy.
But *Antioch's* President must be obey'd;
Such is the Roman Discipline: While We
Can only pity, whom we dare not spare.

A I R.

*Descend, kind Pity, heav'nly Guest,
Descend, and fill each human Breast
With sympathizing Woe.
That Liberty, and Peace of Mind,
May sweetly harmonize Mankind,
And bless the World below.*

B 2

SCENE

S C E N E III.

Theodora, *with the Christians.*

R E C I T A T I V E.

Tho' hard, my Friends, yet wholsom are the Truths
Taught in Affliction's School; whence the pure Soul
Rises refin'd, and soars above the World.

A I R.

*Fond, flatt'ring World, adieu!
Thy gaily-smiling Pow'r,
Empty Treasures,
Fleeting Pleasures,
Ne'er shall tempt, or charm me more.
Faith inviting,
Hope delighting,
Nobler Joys we now persue.*

R E C I T A T I V E.

Irene. O bright Example of all Goodness!
How easy seems Affliction's heavy Load,
While thus instructed, and companion'd thus,
As 'twere, with Heav'n conversing, we look down
On the vain Pomp of proud Prosperity!

A I R.

*Bane of Virtue, Nurse of Passions,
Soother of vile Inclinations,
Such is, Prosperity, thy Name.*

True

*True Happiness is only found,
Where Grace, and Truth, and Love abound,
And pure Religion feeds the Flame.*

C H O R U S.

*Come, mighty Father, mighty Lord,
With Love our Souls inspire :
While Grace, and Truth, flow from thy Word,
And feed the holy Fire.*

S C E N E IV.

R E C I T A T I V E.

Messenger. --- Fly, fly, my Brethren, Heathen Rage
Persues us swift, -----

Arm'd with the Terrors of insulting Death.

Irene. Ah ! whither should we fly ? or fly from whom ?
The Lord is still the same, to day, for ever :
And his Protection *here*, and *ev'ry where*. ---
--- Tho' gath'ring round our destin'd Heads
The Storm now thickens, and looks big with Fate ;
Still shall thy Servants wait on Thee, O Lord,
And in thy saving Mercy put their Trust.

A I R.

*As with rosy Steps the Morn
Advancing, drives the Shades of Night ;
So from virtuous Toils well-borne,
Raise Thou our Hopes of endless light.
---Triumphant Saviour ! Lord of Day !
Thou art the Life, the Light, the Way.*

C H O-

THEODORA

CHORUS.

*All Pow'r in Heav'n above, or Earth beneath,
 Belongs to Thee alone,
 Thou everlasting One,
 Mighty to save, in Perils, Storm, and Death.*

SCENE V.

Enter SEPTIMIUS.

RECITATIVE.

Septimius. Mistaken Wretches! why thus blind to Fate,
 Do ye in private Oratories dare
 Oppose the President's Decree? and scorn
 With native Rites to celebrate the Day,
 Sacred to *Cæsar*, and protecting *Jove*?

AIR.

*Dread the Fruits of Christian Folly,
 And this stubborn Melancholy;
 Fond of Life and Liberty.
 Chains, and Dungeons are ye wooing,
 And the Storm of Death pursuing;
 Rebels to the known Decree.*

RECITATIVE.

Theodora. Deluded Mortal! call it not Rebellion,
 That thus we persevere in Spirit, and Truth,
 To worship God: It is *his* dread Command,
 His, whom we cannot, dare not, disobey,
 Tho' Death be our Reward. ----

Septimius. --- Death is not yet thy Doom;
 But worse than Death to such a virtuous Mind,

Which

T H E O D O R A.

7

Which *Didymus* wants Eloquence to praise. ---
 Lady, these Guards are order'd to convey you,
 To the *vile Place*, a Prostitute, to whom
Valens thinks proper to devote your Charms.

Theodora. O worse than Death indeed! --- Lead me, ye
 Guards,
 Lead me, or to the Rack, or to the Flames;
 I'll thank your gracious Mercy. ---

A I R.

Angels, ever bright, and fair,
Take, O take me to your Care:
Speed to your own Courts my Flight,
Clad in Robes of Virgin white. [Exit with *Septimius*.

S C E N E VI.

Enter D I D Y M U S.

R E C I T A T I V E.

Didymus. Unhappy happy Crew! --- why stand you thus
 Wild with Amazement? --- say where is my Love,
 My kind Instructor in fair Virtue's Path,
 My Life, my *Theodora*? --- has the Tyrant
 Seiz'd on his guiltless Prey? ---

Irene. --- Alas! she's gone.
 Too late thou cam'st to save, (if in thy Pow'r
 To save,) the fairest, noblest, best of Women. ---
 A *Roman* Soldier led her trembling hence
 To the *vile Place*, where *Venus* keeps her Court.
 Yet on his Brow Reluctance seem'd to sit,
 And helpless Pity bade us wait our Doom.

A I R.

THEODORA.

A I R.

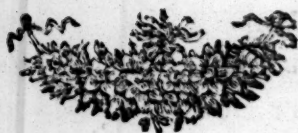
Didym. *Kind Heav'n, if Virtue be thy Care
 With Courage fire me,
 Or Art inspire me,
 To free the Captive Fair.
 On the Wings of the Wind will I fly,
 With this Princess to live, or this Christian to die.* [Exit.

R E C I T A T I V E.

Irene. *O Love! how great thy Pow'r! but greater still,
 When Virtue prompts the steady Mind to prove
 The native Strength in Deeds of highest Honour.*

C H O R U S.

*Go, gen'rous, pious Youth,
 May all the Pow'rs above
 Reward thy virtuous Love,
 Thy Constancy and Truth;
 With Theodora's Charms,
 Free from these dire Alarms:
 Or crown you with the Blest,
 In Glory, Peace, and Rest.*





T H E O D Ò R A.

P A R T II. S C E N E I.

R E C I T A T I V E.

V A L E N S.

YE Men of *Antioch*, with solemn Pomp,
Renew the grateful Sacrifice to *Jove* :
And while your Songs ascend the vaulted Skies,
Pour on the smoking Altars Floods of Wine
In honour of the smiling Deities,
Fair *Flora*, and the *Cyprian* Queen.

C H O R U S.

*Queen of Summer, Queen of Love,
And thou cloud-compelling Jove ;
Grant a long, and happy Reign,
To great Cæsar, King of Men.*

A I R.

Valens. *Wide spread his Name,
And make his Glory,
Of endless Fame
The lasting Story.*

R E C I T A T I V E.

Return, *Septimius*, to the stubborn Maid,
And learn her final Resolution.

If e'er the Sun with prone Career has reach'd
 The Western Isles, she deigns an Offering
 To the great Gods, (who subjected the World
 To conqu'ring Rome) she shall be free. --- If not,
 The meanest of my Guards with lustful Joy
 Shall triumph o'er her boasted Chastity.

CHORUS.

*Venus laughing from the Skies
 Will applaud her Votaries: ---
 When seizing the Treasure,
 We revel in Pleasure,
 And Revenge sweet Love supplies.*

S C E N E II.

Theodora, in her Place of Confinement.

RECITATIVE.

O thou bright Sun! how sweet thy Rays,
 To Health, and Liberty! but here, alas!
 They swell the agonizing Thought of Shame,
 And pierce my Soul with Sorrows yet unknown.

AIR.

*With Darkness deep as is my Woe,
 Hide me, ye Shades of Night.
 Your thickest Veil around me throw,
 Conceal'd from human Sight.
 Or come, thou Death, thy Victim save,
 Kindly embasom'd in the Grave.*

[Symphony of soft Musick.]

REC-

THEODORA.

11

RECITATIVE.

But why art thou disquieted, my Soul? ---
Hark! Heav'n invites thee in sweet rapt'rous Strains
To join the ever-singing, ever-loving Choir
Of Saints, and Angels in the Courts above.

A I R.

*O that I on Wings cou'd rise,
Swiftly sailing through the Skies,
As skims the silver Dove;
That I might rest,
For ever blest,
With Harmony and Love.*

S C E N E III.

RECITATIVE.

Didymus. Long have I known thy friendly social Soul,
Septimius, oft experienc'd in the Camp,
And perilous Scenes of War, when Side by Side
We fought, and brav'd the Dangers of the Field,
Dependent on each other's Arm; with Freedom then,
I will disclose my Mind. --- I am a Christian.
And she, who by Heav'n's influential Grace,
With pure religious Sentiments inspir'd
My Soul, with virtuous Love inflam'd my Heart:
Ev'n she, who, shame to all Humanity!
Is now condemn'd to public Lust. ---

Septimius. --- No more:
The Shame reflects too much upon thy Friend,
The mean, tho' duteous, Instrument of Pow'r;
Knowing her Virtues only, not thy Love.

C 2

A I R.

T H E O D O R A.

A I R.

*Tho' the Honours, that Venus, and Flora receive
From the Romans, this Christian refuses to give;
Yet nor Venus, nor Flora, delight in the Woe,
That disfigures their fairest Resemblance below.*

R E C I T A T I V E.

Didymus. O save her then, or give me Pow'r to save
By free Admission to th' imprison'd Maid.

Septimius. My Guards, not less asham'd of their vile Office,
Will second your Intent, and pleasure me.

Didymus. I will reward them with a bounteous Heart,
And you, my Friend, with all that Heav'n can give
To the Sincerity of Pray'r.

A I R.

*Deeds of Kindness to display,
Pity suing,
Mercy wooing,
Who the Call can disobey?
But the opportune Redress,
Of virtuous Beauty in Distress,
All Earth will praise, and Heav'n repay.*

S C E N E IV.

Irene with the Christians.

R E C I T A T I V E.

The Clouds begin to veil the Hemisphere,
And heavily bring on the Night; the Last
Perhaps to us, Oh! that it were the last

To

To *Theodora*, ere she fall a Prey
To unexampled Lust and Cruelty.

A I R.

*Defend her, Heav'n. --- Let Angels spread
Their viewless Tents around her Bed;
Keep her from vile Assaults secure,
Still ever calm, and ever pure.*

SCENE V. *Theodora's Place of Confinement.*

Didymus at a distance, the Vizor of his Helmet clos'd.

RECITATIVE.

Or lull'd with Grief, or, rapt her Soul to Heav'n,
In Innocence of Thought, entranc'd she lies;
Her Beauty shining still, like *Cynthia*,
Rising in clouded Majesty. --- *[Approaching her.]*

A I R.

*Sweet Rose, and Lily, flow'ry Form,
Take me, your faithful Guard;
To shield you from bleak Wind, and Storm:
A Smile be my Reward.*

RECITATIVE.

Theodora. [Starting.] O save me, Heav'n, in this my perilous Hour!

Didymus. Start not, much injur'd Princess, --- I come not
As one this Place might give you Cause to dread,
But your Deliverer; sent by just Heav'n
To save the World's unrival'd Ornament
Of Virtue, Faith, and every Christian Grace;

And

And that dear Ornament to *Theodora*,
Her Angel-Purity. --- If you vouchsafe
But to change Habit with --- your *Didymus*.

[*Discovering himself.*

Theodora. --- Excellent Youth!
I know thy Courage, Virtue, and thy Love;
And never can consent they should destroy
Their Author. This becomes not *Theodora*,
But the blind Enemies of Truth. --- Oh, no;
It must not be. --- Yet *Didymus* can give
A Boon, will make me happy, nor himself
Endanger. ---

Didymus. --- How? or what? my Soul with Transport
Listens to the Request. ---

A I R.

Theod. *The Pilgrim's Home, the sick Man's Health,*
The Captive's Ransom, poor Man's Wealth,
From thee I wou'd receive.
These, and a thousand Treasures more,
That gentle Death has now in store,
Thy Hand and Sword can give.

R E C I T A T I V E *accompany'd.*

Didymus. --- Forbid it, Heav'n!
Shall I destroy the Life I came to save?
Shall I in *Theodora's* Blood embrue
My guilty Hands; and give her Death, who taught
Me first to live? ---

--- Or say, what Right have I
To take, what just Reflection bids confess
Not at your own Disposal? --- Think it too

No less a Crime, if thus inflexible
Your Safety you refuse. --- Time forbids more :
Strait then resolve to gain your Liberty,
Preserve your Honour, and secure your Life.

Theodora. Ah! what is Life, or Liberty to me,
That *Didymus* must purchase with his own?

Didymus. Fear not for me. The Pow'r that led me hither
Will guard me hence; if not, his Will be done.

Theodora. Yes, kind Deliverer, I will trust that Pow'r
To hear my Pray'r for Thee, so lately heard
For *Theodora*, who had ne'er expos'd
Her Friend, to shun a Danger, that concern'd
Only her Life. --- Farewel, thou gen'rous Youth.

Didymus. Farewel, thou Mirror of the Virgin State.

D U E T.

Theod. To thee, thou glorious Son of Worth,
Didym. To thee, whose Virtues suit thy Birth,
Theod. Be Life and Safety giv'n;
Didym. Be every Blessing giv'n:
Both. I hope again to meet on Earth,
But sure shall meet in Heav'n.

S C E N E VI.

Irene with the Christians.

RECITATIVE.

'Tis Night, but Night's kind Blessing is deny'd
To Grief like ours. --- How can we think of Sleep,
While *Theodora* wakes to Misery;

And

And threatning Death hangs hovering o'er our Heads!
Be Pray'r our Refuge; Pray'r to *Him*, who rais'd,
And still can raise, the Dead to Life and Joy.

C H O R U S.

*" He saw the lovely Youth, Death's early Prey;
Alas! too early snatch'd away!
He heard his Mother's Funeral Cries:
Rise, Youth, he said: The Youth begins to rise:
Lowly the Matron bow'd, and bore away the Prize.*





T H E O D O R A.

P A R T III. S C E N E I.

IRENE *with the Christians.*

A I R.

LORD to thee, each Night, and Day,
Strong in Hope, we sing, and pray:
Tho' convulsive rocks the Ground,
And thy Thunders roll around;
Still to thee, each Night and Day,
Strong in Hope, we sing, and pray.

S C E N E II.

Enter Theodora, in the Habit of Didymus.

R E C I T A T I V E.

Irene. But see, the good, the virtuous *Didymus*!
Wakeful, as *Philomel*, with throbbing Heart,
He comes to join with us in Pray'r
For *Theodora*. ---

[*Theodora, discovering herself.*]

No; Heav'n has heard your Pray'rs for *Theodora*:
Behold her safe. --- Oh! that as free, and safe,

D

Were

Were *Didymus*, my kind Deliverer!
But let this Habit speak the rest. ---

A I R.

*When sunk in Anguish, and Despair,
I cried to Heav'n, Heav'n heard my Pray'r,
And bade a tender Father's Care
The generous Youth employ.
The generous Youth obey'd, and came,
All rapt in Love's divinest Flame,
To save a wretched Virgin's Fame,
And turn her Grief to Joy.*

C H O R U S.

*Blest be the Hand, and blest the Pow'r,
That in the dark, and dangerous Hour,
Sav'd thee from cruel Strife.
Lord, favour still the kind Intent,
And bless thy gracious Instrument,
With Liberty, and Life.*

S C E N E III.

R E C I T A T I V E.

Messenger. Undaunted in the Court stands *Didymus*,
Virtuously proud of rescued Innocence;
But vain to save the generous Hero's Life,
Are all Intreaties, ev'n from Romans vain. ---
And high-enrag'd the President protests,
Shou'd he regain the Fugitive, no more
To try her with the Fear of Infamy,
But with the Terrors of a cruel Death. ---

Irene.

Irene. Ah! *Theodora*, whence this sudden Change
From Grief's pale Looks, to Looks of red'ning Joy?

RECITATIVE *accompany'd.*

Theodora. --- O my *Irene*, Heav'n is kind;
And *Valens* too is kind, to give me Pow'r
To execute in turn my Gratitude,
While safe my Honour. ---

--- Stay me not, dear Friend,
Only assist me, with a proper Dress,
That I may ransom the too generous Youth.

D U E T.

Irene. *Whither, Princess, do you fly,*
Sure to suffer, sure to die?

Theod. No, no, *Irene*, no;
To Life, and Joy I go.

Irene. *Vain Attempt.* --- O stay, O stay.

Theod. *Duty calls* --- *I must obey.* [Exit *Theodora.*

RECITATIVE.

Irene. She's gone, disdaining Liberty and Life,
And every Honour this frail Life can give.
Devotion bids aspire to nobler Things,
To boundless Love, and Joys ineffable.
And such her Expectation from kind Heav'n.

A I R.

New Scenes of Joy come crowding on,
While Sorrow fleets away;
Like Mists before the rising Sun,
That gives a glorious Day.

D 2

SCENE

S C E N E IV.

Valens to Didymus.

R E C I T A T I V E.

--- Is it a Christian Virtue then,
To rescue from the Hands of Justice, One
Condemn'd by my Authority? ---

Didymus. Such my Religion it condemns all Crimes,
None more than Disobedience to just Pow'r.
And had your Sentence doom'd her but to Death,
I then might have deplor'd your Cruelty,
And not attempted to defeat it. --- Yet
I own no Crime, unless it be a Crime
To've hinder'd you from perpetrating that,
Which wou'd have made you odious to Mankind;
At least the fairest Half. ---

Valens. --- Ay, ay, fond Man!
It was the Charms of Beauty, not of Virtue,
That prompted you to save her. --- Take him hence,
And lead him to Repentance, or --- to Death.

S C E N E V.

Enter Theodora.

R E C I T A T I V E.

Theodora. Be That *my* Doom. --- You may inflict it *here*
With legal Justice, *there* 'tis Cruelty.
If Blood your angry Laws require; behold,
The Principal is come to pay the Debt.

And

And welcome sure to *Romans* the Exchange,
A warlike Hero for an helpless Maid.

Septimius. Dwells there such virtuous Courage in the Sex!
Preserve them, O ye Gods, preserve them both. ---
Ye *Romans*, join in the Request, if e'er
Lucretia's Memory was dear to you,
Or this your Leader's Valour, and Renown.

A I R.

*From Virtue springs each generous Deed,
That claims our grateful Pray'r.
Let Justice for the Hero plead,
And Pity save the Fair.*

A I R.

Valens. Cease, ye *Slaves*, your fruitless Pray'r;
The Pow'rs below
No Pity know,
For the Brave, or for the Fair:
Cease, ye *Slaves*, your fruitless Pray'r.

[*Didymus to Septimius.*]

--- 'Tis kind, my Friends, but kinder still,
If for this Daughter of *Antiochus*,
In Mind as noble as her Birth, your Pray'rs
Prevail, that *Didymus* alone shall die. ---

[*To Theodora.*]

Had I as many Lives as Virtues Thou,
Freely for thee I would resign them all.

Theodora. Oppose not, *Didymus*, my just Desires.
For know, that 'twas Dishonour I declin'd,

Not

Not Death; most welcome now, if *Didymus*
Were safe, whose only Crime was my Escape.

C H O R U S.

*How strange their Ends,
And yet how glorious;
Where each contends
To fall victorious!
Where Virtue its own Innocence denies,
And for the Vanquish'd the glad Victor dies!*

R E C I T A T I V E.

[*Didymus to Valens.*]

On me your Frowns, your utmost Rage exert,
On me, your Prisoner in Chains. ---

Theodora. --- Those Chains
Are due to me, and Death to me alone.

* *Valens.* --- Are ye then Judges for yourselves?
Not so our Laws are to be trifled with.
If Both plead guilty, 'tis but Equity,
That Both should suffer. ---

A I R.

*Ye Ministers of Justice, lead them hence,
I cannot, will not, bear such Insolence.
And as our Gods they honour, or despise,
Fall they their Supplicants, --- or Sacrifice.*

[Exit.]

SCENE

S C E N E VI.

RECITATIVE.

Didymus. --- And must such Beauty suffer!

Theodora. --- Such useful Valour be destroy'd!

Septimius. --- Destroy'd,

Alas! by an unhappy Constancy!

RECITATIVE.

Didymus. Yet deem us not unhappy, gentle Friend,
Nor rash; for Life we neither hate nor scorn:
But think it a cheap Purchase for the Prize,
Reserv'd in Heav'n for Purity and Faith.

A I R.

*Streams of Pleasure ever flowing,
Fruits ambrosial ever growing,
Golden Thrones,
Starry Crowns,
Are the Triumphs of the Blest.
When from Life's dull Labours free,
Clad with Immortality,
They enjoy a lasting Rest.*

D U E T.

Didymus and Theodora.

*Thither let our Hearts aspire.
Objects pure of pure Desire,
Still increasing,
Ever pleasing,*

T H E O D O R A.

*Wake the Song, and tune the Lyre,
Of the blissful holy Choir.*

S C E N E VII.

Irene with the Christians.

R E C I T A T I V E.

Ere This their Doom is past, and they are gone
To prove, that *Love is stronger far than Death.*

C H O R U S.

*O Love divine, thou Source of Fame,
Of Glory, and all Joy;
Let equal Fire our Souls inflame,
And equal Zeal employ:
That we the glorious Spring may know,
Whose Streams appear'd so bright below.*

F I N I S.

